

What is claimed is;

1. An abnormal shadow detecting method comprising the steps of

detecting primary prospective abnormal shadow regions
5 in images of objects by different kinds of detecting processes,
determining whether or not the respective primary prospective
abnormal shadow regions are of a desired abnormal shadow by
methods different from each other according to the kinds of
processes by which the respective primary prospective abnormal
10 shadow regions are detected, and

outputting as final prospective abnormal shadow regions
only primary prospective abnormal shadow regions which are
determined to be of a desired abnormal shadow.

2. An abnormal shadow detecting method as defined in
15 Claim 1 in which whether or not the respective primary
prospective abnormal shadow regions are of a desired abnormal
shadow is determined on the basis of a combination of a
plurality of characteristic values for the respective primary
prospective abnormal shadow regions predetermined by the kinds
20 of processes by which the respective primary prospective
abnormal shadow regions are detected.

3. An abnormal shadow detecting method as defined in
Claim 2 in which whether or not the respective primary
prospective abnormal shadow regions are of a desired abnormal
25 shadow is determined on the basis of Mahalanobis distances in
the plurality of characteristic values.

4. An abnormal shadow detecting method as defined in Claim 1 in which the object is a breast.

5. An abnormal shadow detecting system comprising
a primary prospective region detecting means which
5 detects primary prospective abnormal shadow regions in images
of objects on the basis of image data representing the images
of the objects by different kinds of detecting processes,
a determining means which determines whether or not the
respective primary prospective abnormal shadow regions are of
10 a desired abnormal shadow by methods different from each other
according to the kinds of processes by which the respective
primary prospective abnormal shadow regions are detected, and
a final prospective abnormal shadow region outputting
means which outputs as final prospective abnormal shadow
15 regions only primary prospective abnormal shadow regions which
are determined to be of a desired abnormal shadow.

6. An abnormal shadow detecting system as defined in Claim 5 in which whether or not the respective primary
prospective abnormal shadow regions are of a desired abnormal
20 shadow is determined on the basis of a combination of a
plurality of characteristic values for the respective primary
prospective abnormal shadow regions predetermined by the kinds
of processes by which the respective primary prospective
abnormal shadow regions are detected.

25 7. An abnormal shadow detecting system as defined in Claim 6 in which whether or not the respective primary

prospective abnormal shadow regions are of a desired abnormal shadow is determined on the basis of Mahalanobis distances in the plurality of characteristic values.

8. An abnormal shadow detecting system as defined in
5 Claim 5 in which the object is a breast.

9. A computer program for causing a computer to execute an abnormal shadow detecting process comprising the steps of
detecting primary prospective abnormal shadow regions
in images of objects by different kinds of detecting processes,
10 determining whether or not the respective primary
prospective abnormal shadow regions are of a desired abnormal
shadow by methods different from each other according to the
kinds of processes by which the respective primary prospective
abnormal shadow regions are detected, and
15 outputting as final prospective abnormal shadow regions
only primary prospective abnormal shadow regions which are
determined to be of a desired abnormal shadow.